A

CATECHISM

FOR

SERVANTS,

POINTING OUT THE DUTIES

OF THE

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AND THE

MAID OF ALL WORK.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

BATH:

PRINTED BY BENJAMIN HIGHAN,

46, Walcot Street:

SOLD BY SUTFABY & Co. LONDON.

1843.

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6d.

THE HOUSEMAID.

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- Q. What is the business of the housemaid?
- A. To keep the house clean, attend to the bedrooms, and take the charge of the linen.
 - Q. Is this all that is required?
- A. Every housemaid is expected to do this, and the mistress will order the rest.
 - Q. What is the great art of a housemaid?
- A. To do her work thoroughly, unseen and unheard.
 - Q. How can this be done?
- A. By cleaning the rooms when they are least used by the family, by not leaving them unfinished, and by never singing or talking loud going up and down stairs.
- Q. Should a housemaid enter a room without knocking?
- A. She may go into a sitting-room without knocking, but not into a bed-room when there is any one there.
 - Q. What is to be done daily in a bed-room?
- A. To make the bed, to dust the room, and supply water once—to empty the slops twice.

- Q. How do you make a bed?
- A. It is made by two persons—we place two chairs at the bottom, and take off the clothes one at a time, then shake the bed at the four corners, pull it to the top, and turn it over.
 - Q. Why do you pull it to the top?
- A. Because it makes the feathers lie higher at the head.
 - Q. How do you put on the sheets?
- A. The first sheet right-side outwards, and the mark at the bottom; the 2nd sheet wrong-side outwards and the mark at the bottom.
 - Q. Why do you do this?
- A. Because it is dirty to change the bottom part to the top, and the mark is a guide.
 - Q. Name the different parts of bed furniture?
- A. The bases round the bottom; the valens round the top; the curtains at the sides: the head cloth at the back, and the teaster at the top.
 - Q. How do you empty the slops?
- A. I rince out the chamber vessels with the water from the basin and wipe them quite dry with a rag kept for that only—I rince out the basin with clear water and wipe it with another cloth.
 - Q, Will this keep the chamber vessels clean?

- A. No; they must be scalded out twice a week.
- Q. What do you do with your pail?
- A. I wash out my pail and rag with clean water, directly I have done with them, and place them in the open air.
 - Q. What water do you use for the rooms?
- A. That for washing should be soft, and the jug kept clean; that for the mouth should be spring water, and the bottle and the glass cleaned every day.
 - Q. What dusting is necessary every day?
- A. The washing-stand must be wiped down, the tables, ledges, and looking-glasses dusted; and if there be any flue about the room it may be taken up with the duster.
 - Q. What do you mean by flue?
- A. The light parts of the feathers that come out of the bed.
 - Q. How can this flue be prevented?
- A. If there is but a little hole in the seams of the ticking, the flue and feathers will come out, and I should mend it directly; but if they come out much without a hole, the bed wants new waxing, and I should tell my mistress.
- Q, Have you told me all that is to be done daily in a bed-room?

- A. No; a good housemaid is expected to put the room tidy every time after any one dresses in it; to clean the combs and brushes when they are dirty, and to place the night things ready on the bed when it is turned down.
 - Q. What is turning down the bed?
- A. It is turning down a little of the clothes to shew the pillows, drawing the curtains, window curtains, emptying the slops, and seeing all things right for the night.
 - Q. How do you leave a bed that is out of use?
- A. I fold up the clothes, and shake the bed up as light as possible, giving it a shake every day or two to prevent the feathers from matting in lumps.
- Q. How do you keep beds aired that are out of use?
- A. By sleeping in them once a week, which is the place of a housemaid; or else they must be taken to the fire for they soon get damp—I place the blankets neatly folded under other beds, if I am permitted.
 - Q. How often should a bed-room be swept?
- A. Twice a week; nurseries, and sitting-rooms every day.
 - Q. How often should a bed-room be scoured?

- A. Once in a month or six weeks.
- Q. How do you begin cleaning a bed-room?
- A. I clean out the fire-place and stove, and then prepare the room for sweeping.
 - Q How do you do this?
- A. I take up the carpets, turn up the bases of the bed, shake the toilet cover—cover that and every thing from the dust—and throw wet tealeaves or wet sand over the room to prevent the dust from rising.
 - Q. Do you dust the room before you sweep it?
- A. No; except that I sometimes brush the window curtains, and valens of the bed with a clean clothes-brush.
 - Q. How do you sweep a room?
- A. I first sweep under the bed, then under the heavy furniture with a hand broom, if the other is too large; I move the light furniture into the middle of the room, and sweep behind it, and in all the corners.
 - Q. Do you dust the room directly after sweeping?
- A. No; I leave it for about a quarter of an hour, for the dust to settle.
 - Q. What parts of a room do you dust?
- A. After sweeping I dust every part, particularly the frames of the chairs, the legs of the

tables, the doors, and drawers, the picture frames window frames, and behind the shutters.

- Q. Do you dust the ceilings and walls?
- A. Yes, with a Turk's-head broom.
- Q. What should you do with the dust?
- A. I should look over it carefully before I throw it away, to see that nothing of value is swept away by accident.
 - Q. What do you use for scouring?
 - A. Fuller's earth wetted and cold water,
 - Q. Why not soap?
- A. Because it makes the boards look black and is wasteful.
 - Q. How do you scour?
- A. I wet a place as far as I can reach, then put fuller's earth over the brush, and scrub the boards with the grain of the wood.
 - Q. Should you use both hands?
- A. Yes, first one and then the other, because I can reach farther, work faster, and not so soon get tired.
 - Q. How do you go on?
- A. I clean the boards with clean water, and rub them with a dry cloth.
 - Q. How often do you change the water?
- A. As often as it is dirty, or the boards cannot be well cleaned.

- Q. Where do you begin scouring?
- A. Under the bed that it may get dry soon.
- Q. How can you get grease out of boards?
- A. By putting fuller's earth wet with boiling water upon the place, and letting it stay a little, then scrubbing it well, if this will not do, it must be planed.
 - Q. What caution is necessary in scouring?
- A. I must take care not to knock the brush against the paint, or leave the mark of it against the skirting board, either in a room, or staircase.
 - Q. How often should paint be cleaned?
 - A. Once a year.
 - Q. When?
- A. In the Spring, because it destroys the eggs of insects, and prevents fleas.
 - Q. What paint do you clean?
- A. The doors and frame work, the window frames and shutters, the skirting board and ledges.
 - Q. How do you clean paint?
- A. With a flannel, soap, and warm water, but never use a brush, unless I cannot get it clean without one.
 - Q. How do you clean windows?
 - A. I put a few spots of wet whitening on each

pane, with a bit of flannel, and then clean them with a linen cloth.

- Q. How do you clean the outside?
- A. A mistress generally allows a man to do that who is used to it, and I clean the inside at the same time.
 - Q. How do you clean furniture?
- A. I rub it with a flannel, on which I put a little bees-wax and rosin melted in oil; this I do about once a month, and dust it well twice a week.
 - Q. Should all furniture have this?
- A. No; only management and oak, painted furniture and fancy woods should be wiped well with flannel only.
 - Q. How do you prepare a rush-light?
- A. I clean out the stand every day, and fill the little box with water quite full—I make the rush-light to burn well before I blow it out, and fix it upright in the stand.
 - Q. What charge do you take of the linen?
- A. I look out and mend the clothes, for the wash, set down the list of them, see them right when they are washed, and put them directly nto their proper rooms.
 - Q. What else?
 - A. I regulate the hand towels, table covers,

and sheets, supplying the rooms with them at proper stated times.

- Q. Has a housemaid any thing to do with airing clothes?
- A. The charge of airing is given entirely to the housemaid, and the lives of the family are endangered if she neglect this part of her trust.
 - Q. How do you air clothes?
- A. I take advantage of a clear brisk fire when there are no sauce-pans on it placing the clothes on a small horse before it, a few at a time, and only once double, I turn them till every side has been at the fire.
 - Q. How can you tell when they are aired?
- A. By feeling them when they are warm, if any dampness remains in them I shall find it out, if not, I fold them up neatly, and carry them to their rooms.
- Q. Do you wait for things to be given you to air?
- A. No, ladies generally put out their things on the bed or table, and I shall look for them there; if they are not put out at a proper time, I should remind them of it.
- Q. Do you look out the clothes for gentlemen?

- A. Gentlemen generally expect a servant to take their clothes out of their drawers, air them, and place them ready on proper days.
 - Q. How do you air sheets?
- A. I unfold them, and air them one at a time on a small horse, taking care not to rumple or grease them.
 - Q. How long will they keep aired?
- A. If more convenient, I may air them a day or two before they are wanted, but if it is more than a week, they must be warmed again, for things will not keep aired longer in winter time.
- Q. How should you behave to the family you serve?
- A. With respect, as to superiors; talk little, except when spoken to; and never call after my mistress, but go up to her when she is wanted.
 - Q. Can you show respect in any other way?
- A. I should never make useless noise in hearing of the family by calling out to my fellow servants, or slamming doors, and never leave a door open when any one is in the room, unless desired.
 - Q. Is any thing else required?
 - A. I should always call the gentlemen

"master" or "mister," and the ladies "ma'am," or "miss," even if they are quite young.

- Q. Should not all servants observe these things?
- A. Yes, but a housemaid has more temptation to neglect them, being more with the family.
 - Q. What should you be careful to avoid?
- A. I should never pry into the secrets of the family, by reading letters or papers that may be left about—or repeat any family affairs I might chance to overhear—I should not open drawers or desks out of curiosity, and I should never make game of the family, or speak against them.
 - Q. What should be your aim in servitude?
- A. I should endeavour to attach myself to the family I serve, study their interest in every thing, and should try to gain their confidence by proving myself worthy of it.
 - Q. Are you never to sing, talk, or laugh loud?
- A. Never in the hearing of the family; it is disturbing, and disrespectful, I should remember I am not in my own house.
 - Q. At what time do you make the beds?
- A. I should rise early enough to breakfast before the family, and when they assemble at breakfast, I go to make the beds.

- Q. What do you take with you?
- A. My slop pail and a jug of clean water.
- Q. What do you do first?
- A. I throw open the windows and the beds to air them, empty the slops and fill the jugs, and then I am ready to make the beds with another servant.
 - Q. When do you dust the rooms?
 - A. After the beds are made.
- Q. How many times do you tuck up a bed whilst you are making it?
- A. Three times, I pull the first sheet very tight and tuck it up all round, then the second sheet the same, and once more just before putting on the quilt.
 - Q. What care do you take of the shoes?
- A. I take the dirty boots and shoes out of every room when I turn down the beds, I see them properly dried and cleaned, and put them at their right doors again before the family are up the next morning.
 - Q. Do you use more than one pail at a time?
- A. It saves trouble to use two, keeping one pail for cleaning till it is a little dirty, then scouring with it, and changing the other to use instead.

SERVANT OF ALL WORK.

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- Q. What enquiry should you make before you hire yourself to a place?
- A. I should enquire whether the family bears a good character, and whether the place is respectable.
 - Q. Why should you be particular in this?
- A. Because wicked examples may entice me to be wicked too; besides, I should lose my own character, for no respectable person would take me from a bad place.
- Q. What agreement should you make when you hire yourself?
- A. Among other things I should ask leave to go to Church on Sunday.
- Q. Cannot you serve your Master and Mistress unless you serve God?
- A. No; if I neglect my duty to God, I cannot perform my duty to my employers.
 - Q. What is required of every servant?
- A. To be honest, sober, and obedient.
- Q. What temptation has a servant to be dishonest?

- A. That of using or giving away her master's property.
 - Q. Is this stealing?
- A. Yes, it is one of the worst sorts of stealing; it is betraying my trust.
- Q. May not a servant take what she likes, to eat or drink herself?
- A. No; she should take nothing but what is allowed her.
- Q. How may she always tell if she does right in this respect?
- A. If she would not be ashamed for her mistress to see her take it, she may suppose it right.
- Q. May you not throw away little bits, and scraps, the remnant of the dinner?
 - A. No; every thing fit to be used should be saved.
- Q. How can you determine what is fit to be used?
- A. I should ask myself this question, "were it my own, should I throw it away?" if not I should not do so when it is anothers.
- Q. May you give away the broken victuals to the poor?
- A. I have no right to do so; it would not be charity in me, but dishonesty, unless my mistress gave me leave.

Q. May you assist your family if they are in want, by giving them a little from the abundance of your own table?

A. I should always do my best to assist them by sparing what I can from my honest wages, but never the smallest part of my master's property.

Q. How is a servant to be sober?

A. She is to be sober in eating and drinking, sober in mind and conversation.

Q. Does being sober in drinking mean not getting tipsy?

A. It means that, and a great deal more; if I drink more beer, or any other liquor than does me good, I am not a sober woman.

Q. What is being sober in eating?

A. If I have been used at home to coarse fare, and come to a full table of good things, I should be apt to eat too much if I am not careful to be moderate.

Q. What would this lead you to, if you were not moderate?

A. It would lead me to taste every nice thing that came in my way, even those that are not allowed me, whichis an unbecoming and a dirty practice.

Q. If you eat too much would it be likely to injure you?

- A. Yes; it would bring on humours and diseases, for which many a servant has been found to lose her place.
- Q. What do you mean by soberness in mind and conversation?
- A. I mean being chaste, humble, and temperate in mind, thought and speech.
- Q. Is obedience degrading, slavish, and mean spirited?
 - A. No; it is honourable and noble.
 - Q. How do you prove it so?
- A. Soldiers and sailors are most highly respected, they are the most obedient of all men; and the greatest men in the world, attained their honours by strict obedience.
 - Q. Whom do we find the most disobedient?
- A. The vulgar, the ignorant, the proud, and the wicked.
 - Q. What else is necessary in a servant?
- A. To be industrious, civil, and clean.
 - Q. How should you be industrious?
- A. I should not be slow over my work; and should keep myself usefully employed, remembering that I am paid for my time.
- Q. What habits of idleness are servants apt to fall into?

A. Looking out of windows, talking at the back door, sleeping when they ought to be at work, and rising late; all these things should be avoided.

Q. Are you never to work or do any thing for yourself?

A. Yes; I should keep my clothes in order; but not spend too much time on myself.

Q. How can you judge of this?

A. I should never do any thing at any time that I should be ashamed my mistress should know of.

Q. How should you be civil?

A. I should always be respectful, good-tempered, and obliging to my master and mistress, and all the family; never speaking impertmently or saucily.

Q. Who do we find most uncivil?

A. Servants who have been badly brought up are generally pert or unmannerly.

Q. May you ever tell a lie to hide a fault?

A. I should never tell a lie for any purpose whatever; it is one way to sell myself to work wickedness; for the devil is the father of lies.

Q. What consequence will immediately follow if you tell lies?

- A. I must entirely lose the confidence of the family I serve; for they will never trust me even if I do speak the truth.
 - Q. But is it certain they should find it out?
- A. They might not perhaps the first or second time; but they must very soon, if I continue so wicked a practice.
 - Q. In what respect should you be clean?
- A. I should be clean in my person, in my work, and in my cooking.
- Q. How can a servant of all work do the business of a whole house?
- A. If there is a large family, they generally are so good as to help her; if a small one, there is not so much to do.
 - Q. How would you manage your work?
- A. There are two ways; some mistresses like to order their servants to do every thing they wish, then I have no trouble, but do as I am bid.
 - Q.'s What is the other way?
- A. Being left to plan my work myself; when I want help, I then ask some of the family to do the nicest cleanest part for me.
 - Q. If you did not so what would happen?
 - A. I should be always be in a hurry; things

would never be done at the right time; and the house would always be in disorder.

Q. What part of your work should you pick out to be done for you?

A. Making beds; washing tea-things, and glasses; making puddings and pies; or any thing else that was preferred.

Q. Do not some servants get through more work with greater ease and comfort, than others?

A. Yes; though they may work equally fast.

Q. How then is it to be done?

A. The art is in planning the work; using the head to save the heels; and remembering orders.

Q. How do you plan your work?

A. I regulate it so as to divide it equally with the different days; do every thing at its proper time; and keep every thing in its proper place.

Q. Can a servant of all work always keep to her plans?

A. No; she is oftener called off than others, but she should do it when she can, and not be out of humour when she cannot.

Q. What do you mean by using your head to save your heels?

A. When I go up stairs I should think of all I want there; to save running up and down; when I go into a room I should look round to see if there is any thing to do or to take away.

Q. What do you gain by remembering what is told you.

A. If I remember what is told me, a mistress will often let me finish what I am about, and take my own time to do what she wishes done.

Q. If you are careless and forgetful, what will be the consequence?

A. My mistress will make me leave my work to do what she wishes done directly, for fear I should forget it; and this hinders me getting through my business.

Q. What are the advantages of a servant of all work?

A. She has more her own way than others; she is not so likely to be entired to do evil, nor laughed at for doing her duty, she never can bear blame for others, and has her kitchen to herself.

Q. What are the disadvantages?

A. She is often called off from her work to do something else; she is sent out on errands at all hours, and she has no one in the house to keep her company.

- Q. When you are called off from your work what should you do?
- A. I should make up my mind to it as part of the business of my place, and go cheerfully, and never let it teaze me.
- Q. In going on errands what should you observe?
- A. I should always dress tight and decent, that I may not be ashamed to go at any time; I should remember all I want out to save my going again; I should never stop by the way, but make haste home.
 - Q. What is the danger of gossiping.
- A. Bad people are generally fond of talking, and if I am seen talking to them, I should lose my character; besides, the danger of being led astray.
- Q. What else should you observe in going on errands?
- A. I should be careful to pay the money right, and always give up the change as soon as I come back.
- Q. How can you make up for want of company?
- A. A good conscience and a cheerful heart, are always good company; when I am at work

I do not want any other; and I should read my Bible, and get a few good books to amuse me when I have time.

Q. What particular charge has a servant of all work?

A. Her greatest charge is to take care of the house, to keep it from fire and thieves.

Q. How should you keep it from thieves?

A. I should never leave it without my mistress's knowledge, but, particularly when all the family are out; I should never let in any stranger when I am left alone; nor let any one visit me before I know them to be good characters.

Q. Can you take any other precautions?

A. I should not leave plate or any thing valuable in sight, so that idle people passing by could see it; and I should fasten all the doors and windows at the proper time.

Q. What cautions should you use against fire?

A. I should be careful of my candle, particularly, if obliged to go up and down stairs often after dark; and should always put it out before I get into bed, at a distance from the clothes and furniture.

Q. What else should you do?

A. I should never leave any thing near the

fire that would fall in when I am away, or be burnt by a spark flying out; and I should always leave the fire safe at night.

Q. Is there any punishment for servants, if a fire happens through their carelessness, or

negligence?

A. Yes; my friends have told me that there is an Act of Parliament, by which, if any fire has happened from the carelessness or negligence of a servant, that servant must forfeit one hundred pounds; or else, must be imprisoned, and kept to hard labour for eighteen months.

Q. What fault is a servant of all work likely to fall into?

A. She is apt to treat the family she serves as her equals; and lose that respect she owes them as superiors.

Q. What is the consequence?

A. She is unfit for a higher place.

Q. How do you light a fire?

A. First, I clear the grate entirely of all the dust and ashes, then place the wood across and across; over this, I put the large cinders, and some middle-sized coals at top.

Q. What is the grand secret to make a fire burn quickly?

- A. It is to make a free passage for the air quite through the fire, from the bottom to the top.
 - Q. May you not put small coals on?
- A. No; not till the fire is burnt up; or it will put it out.
- Q. Should there not be something on it to eatch fire sooner than wood?
- A. Yes; a few shavings or a little brown paper amongst the wood, to which I put the candle.
 - Q. What water should you put for breakfast?
- A. The softest water I can get that is fit for drinking; it always makes the best tea, coffee, broth, or soup.
 - Q. How do you boil potatoes?
- A. I put them on in cold water, and directly they boil, place the saucepan where it will simmer gently till they are done; I then strain the water from them, throw a little salt over them, heat them carefully over the fire so as not to burn the saucepan; and then they will be dry and flowery.
- Q. What should you be careful to do before you make puddings and pies?
- A. I should have very clean hands which in my situation is not easy—because they get so dirty.

Q. How do you clean your hands?

A. With sand and soap; and if very dirty, I use a little brush, and rince them well afterwards.

Q. At what other times particularly, should your hands be clean, besides when you are touching victuals?

A. I should always wash my hands and face before I go to bed.

Q. What part of your dress should you particularly attend to?

A. I should always wear a clean cap, tidy shoes, and no holes in my clothes.

Q. What follows if you do not attend to this?

A. I should never be looked upon as a respectable servant.

Q. How do you clean shoes?

A. First, I dry them well by the fire, not too near, or it will hurt the leather, and I keep them safe from dust and dirt.

Q. What next?

A. I brush off the dirt with a hard brush; and then black them with a soft one.

Q. Are they then finished?

A. No; I must dry in the blacking by the fire, and then brush them with a proper brush.

Q. Whose shoes do you clean thus?

- A. Gentlemen's shoes.
- Q. Do you clean ladies' shoes in the same manner?
- A. If they are old or rusty, I do; but ladies' shoes look best when they do not shine.
 - Q. Do you black them then without shining?
- A. Never; for the blacking would come off upon their clothes.
 - Q. What do you use instead?
- A. After I have brushed the dirt off, and wiped them, I put two or three drops of sweet oil on them, and rub it well in with my finger.
 - Q. What is the advantage of this?
- A. It preserves the leather from cracking, and makes it keep its colour, and look new a long time.
- Q. Is there any other caution necessary in cleaning shoes?
- A. Yes; my hands must be clean, or, I shall soil the inside, and that is a great fault.
 - Q. How do you clean knives?
- A. I scrape a little white brick upon a smooth board, and rub them on it till they are bright in every part.
 - Q. Do you clean two at once?
- A. No; I am apt to knock them together and notch the edges, if I do.

- Q. Do you call a knife clean when it is rubbed only?
- A. No; it is not clean till wiped from the dust, and the handle cleaned till it feels smooth.
 - Q. How do you clean forks?
- A. I rub them first on the board up and down, till they are bright; then with a skewer covered with leather, I rub between the prongs.
 - Q. How do you wipe a fork?
- A. A fork is never well wiped unless the inside of each prong is as clean as the outside.
- Q. How do you manage your knives to save trouble in cleaning them?
- A. Directly after meals, I put them into very hot water to get off the grease, or vinegar, and wipe them well before I put them away.
- Q. Will not putting them into the fire for a minute, take off the smell of fish, or onions?
- A. It is a very bad plan, as it loosens the handles, and sometimes burns them.
 - Q. What do you do instead?
- A. Boiling water will do better; but cleaning them on a board is best.
- Q. Should you prefer your own way to that of your mistress?
 - A. No; I should do every thing her way,

- Q. Suppose your own way is better?
- A. Then I should tell her my way, and if she still likes her own, I should follow her way; for I came to please her, and not myself.
- Q. Should you always ask her how she likes every thing done?
 - A. Not if I know how to do it myself.
 - Q. But if you do not know?
- A. I should ask her, and not be ashamed to own I did not; nor try to make myself appear more clever than I am.
 - Q. Should you be glad to be told?
- A. Yes; I should feel thankful and say so, and try to learn all I can.
 - Q. With what view should you enter service?
- A. I should expect to find many difficulties and disagreeables, and should make as light of them as I can, I should try to keep my place, and not be fond of change.
 - Q. What are the advantages of so doing?
- A. I shall be respected and esteemed, and save myself the trouble and danger of being out of place, and I secure my character.
 - Q. What else should you remember?
- A. I should remember I must act for myself, as I have left those who before guided me, and I should be careful to act prudently.

- Q. How may you injure your health?
- A. I may lose my health by imprudence, by drinking things cold, or washing in cold water when I am very hot; by walking about without my shoes, or by lifting weights that are too heavy for me.
 - Q. Is it not foolish to be so particular?
- A. No; it is a duty I owe to myself, and my mistress, for it puts her to inconvenience, besides hurting myself, to get ill.
- Q. How are you likely to injure your moral character?
- A. By listening to bad advice, by learning to deceive, and to tell lies to hide my faults, and by giving way to bad company.
 - Q. Are you then to form no acquaintance?
- A. I should form but few, and know who they are first.
- Q. Should you let any man keep you company?
- A. Not without telling my mistress who he is, and asking her leave to let him visit me.
 - Q. Why should you be so cautious?
- A. Some men make a pretence for visiting young women only to see the ways of the house, that they may rob it.

- Q. Should you let him come often to see you?
- A. Not too often, because it would take up too much of my time.
- Q. Should you permit him, or any of your friends, to eat or drink in the house?
- A. No; I have no right to do it, when I wish them to have any thing, I should ask my mistress's leave.



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